

Ch. 8 - Peace in Sight, 1985 - 1994



# Learning Intentions

In this chapter you will learn about:

- The Anglo-Irish Agreement, 1985
- Changing attitudes within unionism
- The Hume-Adams talks
- The Downing Street Declaration, 1993
- The Good Friday Agreement, 1998
- Northern Ireland's economy in the period 1980-1994

# Northern Ireland After World War II

# Negotiating the Anglo-Irish Agreement

- Despite the British government's rejection of the proposals of the New Ireland Forum, they and the Irish government continued to hold talks on the future of Northern Ireland. Hume and other moderate nationalists were fearful that Thatcher's opposition to the Forum would increase support for the actions of the IRA. Taoiseach Garret FitzGerald was also concerned about the growing support of Sinn Féin and was determined to demonstrate to the North's Catholics that constitutional nationalism could lead to a peaceful solution to the Troubles. Putting pressure on Thatcher to find a solution, Hume and FitzGerald asked an Irish-American group, **Friends of Ireland**, which included **Edward 'Ted' Kennedy** and **George Carey**, to press US President **Ronald Reagan** to discuss the future of Northern Ireland with the British Prime Minister.
- When Reagan and Thatcher met in December 1984, the President expressed his concern about the lack of political progress in Northern Ireland and said that he wished to hold further talks about it when they met again. Reagan's intervention, combined with pressure from members of the British cabinet, had the desired effect. Thatcher put a new set of proposals to the Irish government in January 1985. These proposals included the belief that there needed to be closer security cooperation with the Republic to combat the IRA.

# Negotiating the Anglo-Irish Agreement

- These stipulated that:
  - the Irish government would have a role in the government of Northern Ireland
  - that role would not interfere with the constitutional position of Northern Ireland as part of the United Kingdom.
- **James Molyneaux** of the UUP, and the other unionist parties, rejected the proposals because they did not accept that the Irish government should have any role in the political development of Northern Ireland. FitzGerald, however, welcomed Thatcher's announcement as the basis for new talks.
- In February 1985 the SDLP's John Hume announced that he had accepted an invitation from Sinn Féin to hold talks. Hume hoped to convince the IRA to end its campaign of violence and thus make it easier to negotiate a peace agreement with the British government. Hume was strongly criticised by unionists, and by many commentators in the South, who accused him of associating with terrorists.
- In October the UUP and DUP, who took no part in the talks, demanded that Thatcher end negotiations with the Irish government, and warned that further talks would escalate loyalist violence. Paisley also accused the Irish government and the SDLP of supporting the IRA as a way of strengthening their negotiating position.
- Despite unionist pressure, talks continued. As they were about to conclude in November, loyalists took to the streets in a show of force, with a march through Belfast of 5,000 members of the United Ulster Loyalist Front (UULF). They also began to form 'Ulster Clubs' throughout the North to organise loyalist resistance to any agreement that might be made between the British and Irish governments.

# The Anglo-Irish Agreement, 15 November 1985

- The Anglo-Irish talks eventually resulted in the signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement on 15 November 1985 at Hillsborough in Co. Down. Among the terms agreed were the following:
  - An **Intergovernmental Conference** was set up to facilitate regular meetings between officials from both the Northern and Southern governments, the Northern Ireland Secretary and the Irish Foreign Minister.
  - The Irish government would have a **consultative role** on security, cross-border affairs and political matters.
  - The British government accepted that **reunification** might occur in the future, with the consent of the majority of Northern Ireland's citizens.
- Given the Irish dimension to the agreement, Article 1 sought to calm unionist fears by stating that:

## *The two Governments*

1. affirm that any change in the status of Northern Ireland would only come about with the consent of a majority of the people of Northern Ireland;
2. recognise that the present wish of a majority of the people of Northern Ireland is for no change in the status of Northern Ireland;
3. declare that, if in the future a majority of the people of Northern Ireland clearly wish for and formally consent to the establishment of a united Ireland, they will introduce and support in the respective Parliaments legislation to give effect to that wish.

# Reaction to the Agreement

- Nationalists broadly welcomed the Anglo-Irish Agreement, but republican groups, including Sinn Féin, denounced it. Fianna Fáil's Charles Haughey was also opposed to it. He believed that, by signing the agreement, FitzGerald had accepted the permanent partition of Ireland. Some Irish politicians, including Mary Robinson, were also angered by the fact that the unionist parties had not been included in the negotiations leading to the agreement, and insisted that a lasting solution could only be found with the inclusion of all parties concerned.
- Unionists were furious with the Anglo-Irish Agreement. The loyalist paramilitary group, the **Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF)**, declared that those responsible for the agreement were legitimate targets for assassination.
- All 15 DUP and UUP MPs resigned their Westminster seats so as to trigger a series of by-elections, which they believed would demonstrate unionists' rejection of the Belfast Says No - the rallying call of unionist opposition agreement. When the by-elections were held the following January, all but one of those who had resigned regained their seats on an anti-agreement platform.
- In the days after the Anglo-Irish Agreement was signed, unionist opposition increased and the situation became increasingly violent. There were mass rallies and disturbances on the streets. At one point the Secretary of State, **Tom King**, was attacked in Belfast. On 23 November, a crowd of up 100,000 attended a protest rally organised by Paisley. The slogan '**Ulster Says No**' became a rallying call for the crowd, and was to become associated with unionist opposition to the Anglo-Irish Agreement over the next decade.

# Assessing the Anglo-Irish Agreement

- While the Anglo-Irish Agreement did not lead to the security cooperation hoped for by Thatcher, it did have a number of positive results. It was a significant victory for the Irish government, who gained a say in the day-to-day running of Northern Ireland, including changes to policing, education and security.
- From 1985 the Anglo-Irish Agreement helped to develop a habit of cooperation as the two governments began to work more closely on Northern Ireland. Both sides would consult one another before taking any major decisions on Northern Ireland.
- The Anglo-Irish Agreement also helped to strengthen the position of the SDLP's constitutional nationalist approach. This would help shape Gerry Adams' approach in convincing the IRA to pursue a peace strategy.

## Exam Question

- What was the importance of the Anglo-Irish Agreement (1985)? (2019) HL
- Write a short paragraph on the Anglo-Irish Agreement, 1985. (2019) OL



## Key Personality: James Molyneaux (1920-2015)

- James Molyneaux was born in Co. Antrim in 1920 to an Anglican farming family. During World War II he served in the RAF and took part in the liberation of the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. He served as a Unionist councillor in the years after the war and was secretary of the South Antrim Unionist Association from 1964 to 1970. Molyneaux was elected MP for Antrim South in 1970.

## Opposition to Sunningdale

- He opposed Brian Faulkner's support for the Sunningdale Agreement and instead called for integration with Britain, with the British government maintaining direct rule in Northern Ireland. Molyneaux ran for the Unionist Party leadership after Faulkner resigned in 1974 but was beaten by Harry West. He succeeded West as Unionist Party leader in 1979. His prime aim was to strengthen the party which had been weakened by internal divisions and was losing support to Ian Paisley's DUP.



## Opposition to An Irish Dimension

- Molyneaux's integrationist policy was challenged by many in his party, who wanted the Stormont parliament restored. He objected strongly to the British government holding talks with the Irish government about the inclusion of an Irish dimension in Northern Irish affairs during the early 1980s. When the Anglo-Irish Agreement was announced in 1985, he and other Unionist Party MPs resigned their Westminster seats in protest. He retook the seat in the subsequent by-election and joined with Paisley to protest against the Anglo-Irish Agreement but soon withdrew from their joint action after he witnessed Paisley's apparent association with loyalist paramilitaries.

## Opposition to the Peace Process

- The Anglo-Irish Agreement greatly weakened Molyneaux's leadership of the Unionist Party. Many felt that he had failed to protect unionist interests. Following the IRA's announcement of a ceasefire in 1994, Molyneaux stated, 'This is the worst thing that has ever happened us.' His statement revealed his fear that his party would soon become irrelevant. He remained as leader until 1995, when David Trimble succeeded him. Molyneaux continued to play an active role in politics, always maintaining his strong unionist views, opposing the peace process and sometimes openly criticising Trimble's support for it. After Molyneaux's death in 2015, the SDLP's Mark Durkan said of him: As a unionist leader Jim Molyneaux was wary of political initiatives and often seemed reluctant about cross-party engagement, as well as strongly opposed to structuring British-Irish relationships. These dimensions were evident in his pursuit of the North's "total integration" as part of the UK.

# Changing Attitudes in the Unionist Community

- The Anglo-Irish Agreement did not succeed in reducing the violence in Northern Ireland. In fact, after 1985 the UDA and UVF increased their attacks on Catholics as well as the RUC in the hope that this would convince the British government to repeal the agreement. However, realising that the government was not prepared to abandon the agreement, a number of unionists and loyalists put forward new proposals of their own. In a document entitled Common Sense, the UDA proposed a power-sharing government, whose members would be proportional to the political make-up of Northern Ireland, and the creation of a Bill of Rights to guarantee religious and political equality.
- While these measures would still maintain unionist political dominance, Common Sense can be seen as a mellowing of attitudes and an acceptance that a level of equality had to be guaranteed. Moderate unionists also grew uncomfortable with Paisley and the DUP's apparent backing for loyalist paramilitary activities, and gave their support to Molyneaux and the UUP. However, the DUP continued to enjoy widespread popular approval.

# Northern Ireland's Economy in the 1980s

- Northern Ireland's economy was in poor shape in the 1980s. This was due to a number of factors:
  - There was little foreign investment due to the Troubles.
  - A second Oil Crisis began in 1978 and lasted until 1979. This had a significant negative impact on international trade and production.
  - Thatcher's government introduced a number of austere budgets to welfare, health and education. These cuts increased unemployment and made social conditions much harder.
  - The Shankill Road, Belfast, almost deserted because of a bomb scare
- Unemployment in the North rose as companies closed, including some that had been set up during Terence O'Neill's time as Prime Minister in the 1960s. In July 1983, for example, Goodyear announced that it was to close its Craigavon factory with the loss of almost 800 jobs. In 1986 unemployment reached a peak of over 17%.
- Unemployment remained disproportionate during the Troubles. Catholics suffered far higher levels of unemployment generally. Many small businesses and homes were also destroyed. Some areas were left derelict and underdeveloped. This was most prevalent in areas where Protestant and Catholic communities met in Belfast and Derry.

# Northern Ireland's Economy in the 1980s

- The government tried to shore up employment by providing direct aid and in some cases taking control of companies. Two such companies were Harland and Wolff and Short's, which between them provided almost 10% of all industrial jobs in Northern Ireland. Despite government assistance, Harland and Wolff continued to struggle in the early 1980s, producing just three ships between 1980 and 1982. The government did secure a number of contracts for the shipbuilding company from 1982 onwards, and it also began to diversify from shipbuilding into building bridges. These measures helped to secure employment in the short term. The government eventually sold Harland and Wolff in 1989 to a private company.
- Agriculture played an important part in the North's economy in the 1980s. Agriculture provided almost 8% of employment and its contribution to the Northern economy was almost double that of the rest of the UK.
- Throughout the decade, the North's economy was supported by subsidies from the British government. In fact, Northern Ireland was treated quite differently from the rest of the United Kingdom. While Thatcher was pursuing the privatisation of industry and making severe cuts to social services, her government continued to provide funding to Northern Ireland. Cuts were made to social services, but they did not reach the same levels as the rest of the UK. In fact, by 1990 almost a quarter of all employment was being supported by government schemes, not including the numbers employed in the security sector. The subvention (financial support) provided to Northern Ireland was not sustainable. The need to create economic stability became a major political concern for the British government. Economic stability would only be achieved once peace had been secured, allowing Northern Ireland to benefit from a 'peace dividend'.

# IRA Violence

- In 1984 the IRA found a new supporter in Libyan dictator **Colonel Muammar Gaddafi**, who agreed to supply them with weapons and explosives. Freshly supplied, the IRA launched a series of large-scale bombings in the months following the Anglo-Irish Agreement. On 8 November 1987 they killed 11 Protestants who were taking part in a Remembrance Day ceremony in **Enniskillen**, Co. Fermanagh.
- The numbers killed in Northern Ireland rose in 1987 and 1988.

Deaths as a Result of the Conflict in Northern Ireland, 1986-1988

Year	British Security	Republican Paramilitary	Loyalist Paramilitary	Irish Security	Civilian	Total
1986	25	7	2	0	27	61
1987	29	24	4	0	41	98
1988	46	15	5	0	38	104

# IRA Violence

- In 1982 Provisional Sinn Féin won five seats in the re-established Northern assembly. In 1983 Gerry Adams became President of Sinn Féin and was elected MP for West Belfast. Under his leadership the party won 59 seats in the local elections in May 1985. In 1986 Sinn Féin proposed that its members would take their seats in the Dáil. This was a break from the traditional policy of abstention. The proposal was accepted, but some members broke from the party to form **Republican Sinn Féin**, which opposed ending abstention in the South.
- In late 1987, Provisional Sinn Féin sought to make contact with representatives of the British and Irish governments, but both governments refused to meet Sinn Féin while the IRA remained active.
- In early 1988 the SDLP leader, John Hume, approached Gerry Adams in the hope that together they would agree on the common goal of pursuing reunification through peaceful means. During their talks, Hume failed to convince Adams to get the Provisional IRA to abandon its campaign.
- Nevertheless, Hume became convinced that Provisional Sinn Féin needed to be included in talks if the IRA were to end its violence. While Adams and Hume's early talks failed to achieve anything of substance, they did mark a shift in republican thinking. Sinn Féin published a document, ***Towards a Strategy for Peace***, which promoted the goal of a united Ireland, but also recognised the right of all the people of Ireland, North and South, to have a say in this process.

# IRA Violence

- The talks between Hume and Adams also led to Taoiseach Charles Haughey, who had returned to power in 1987, holding secret talks with Adams. Haughey, like Hume, tried to convince Adams that the IRA campaign needed to end, and that a solution to partition would only be found through constitutional politics. Again, these talks failed to end republican violence, but they opened important channels of communication between Sinn Féin and the Irish government.



# A New Round of Talks

- On 24 July 1989 **Peter Brooke** was appointed Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. Brooke had not been involved in the Anglo-Irish Agreement and so he offered the potential for a fresh round of talks between the parties. At the same time, he realised that it would not be easy for the authorities to defeat the Provisional IRA. He supported the idea of encouraging Sinn Féin to sit down to talks.
- In 1990 Brooke facilitated talks between the UUP, DUP, SDLP and the Alliance Party, but little progress was made because of the differences between nationalists and unionists over the Anglo-Irish Agreement. The unionists wanted to replace it, while the SDLP believed that it offered the best framework for negotiating a fuller settlement.
- Margaret Thatcher resigned as Prime Minister in 1990. She was replaced by **John Major**. Brooke continued as Secretary of State and held another series of talks in 1991, which again made little progress. Nonetheless, an understanding had been reached with nationalists, and the unionists seemed more willing to meet. What was even more encouraging was that the talks continued even though the IRA had resumed its bombing campaign in England, including firing mortar shells at 10 Downing Street on 7 February 1991 as the British cabinet met inside. Talks had previously collapsed due to IRA activity, but by the early 1990s the British government seemed increasingly determined to find a political resolution.

# A New Round of Talks

- In December 1991, as a statement of British policy, Brooke declared that the British government had no 'selfish, strategic, or economic interest in Northern Ireland" (The Long War: The IRA and Sinn Féin by Brendan O'Brien). This new approach was welcomed by nationalists. Unionists, however, were reluctant to support it. Though talks in Northern Ireland dragged on, Hume saw them as a positive development, particularly Brooke's statement, which signalled a significant shift in the British government's interest in Northern Ireland.
- While the constitutional parties met, Sinn Féin was also holding secret talks with the British government, and these continued when Brooke was replaced by **Peter Mayhew** in 1992. The question now was, would the British government be prepared to meet openly with Sinn Féin and what kind of reaction would this get from the unionist community?

# Key Personality: Margaret Thatcher (1925-2013)

- **Margaret Thatcher** was born in Lincolnshire in 1925. After studying science, she went on to study law and qualified as a barrister in 1953.

## Early Political Career

- She was elected as a Conservative MP in 1959. She was appointed Minister for Education in the Heath government of 1970. Thatcher was elected as Conservative leader after the party's defeat in the 1974 election.

## Prime Minister

- She won the 1979 general election and became Britain's first female Prime Minister. She faced the task of reviving the ailing British economy and tackling the situation in Northern Ireland. She was determined to defeat the IRA, particularly following the murder of her friend and colleague Airey Neave in March 1979.



# Response to the Hunger Strikes

- When Provisional IRA prisoners went on hunger strike in 1981, she refused to give in to their demands for political status, even after a number of prisoners had died, including Bobby Sands, who had been elected as a Westminster MP. During the hunger strike she stated, 'Crime is crime is crime. It is not political'. She was determined that the IRA would not win a propaganda victory over her government. In recent years documents have emerged that appear to indicate that Thatcher did order secret talks with the IRA during the Hunger Strikes.

## Attempted Assassination

- On 12 October 1984 the IRA attempted to assassinate Thatcher by planting a bomb in the Grand Hotel, Brighton, where the Conservative Party was holding its annual conference. Thatcher survived the attack but five people were killed.



# The Anglo-Irish Agreement

- Despite this, the British government continued to try to find a solution to the Troubles. On 15 November 1985, Thatcher and Garret FitzGerald signed the Anglo-Irish Agreement, which gave the Irish government an advisory role in the governance of Northern Ireland. Thatcher's primary goal for the Agreement was to improve security against the IRA by developing closer cooperation between the British and Irish security forces. During the same period, she gave her backing for British Special Forces to target members of the IRA. This included the SAS assassination of three IRA members in Gibraltar in 1988.
- The Anglo-Irish Agreement brought a hostile reaction from unionists. Loyalists erected signs saying '*Thatcher is a Traitor*', while Unionist MPs in Westminster resigned en masse in protest. Thatcher's government held to the agreement, believing that it offered the best opportunity for peace.

## Slow Progress

- In 1990 Thatcher gave her approval for secret talks to be held with the IRA after she was advised that the IRA was looking to find a peaceful solution to the Troubles. Thatcher was disappointed by the slow rate of political progress made during the remainder of her time in office. However, her efforts in securing the Anglo-Irish Agreement and beginning a dialogue with the IRA provided the basis for all future political developments in the peace process, including the Good Friday Agreement in 1998.

# The Iron Lady

- Throughout her career Thatcher had developed a reputation as a fearsome political leader who regularly refused to bow to pressure from her opponents or members of her own party, particularly on matters of the economy. This quickly earned her the nickname of *the Iron Lady*.
- Margaret Thatcher resigned as Prime Minister in 1990. She remained a backbench MP until her retirement in 1992 and was later appointed to the House of Lords. She died in 2013 at the age of 87.

## Exam Questions

- How did Margaret Thatcher provoke controversy in Northern Ireland? (2018) HL
- How did Margaret Thatcher influence events in Northern Ireland? (2019) OL
- Write a short paragraph on Margaret Thatcher and Northern Ireland. (2017) OL



# A Strategy for Peace and Justice in Northern Ireland

- In October 1991 Hume produced a document *called A Strategy for Peace and Justice in Northern Ireland*. Hume had used Adams's *Towards a Strategy for Peace*, as well as the terms of the Anglo- Irish Agreement, as the basis for this new set of proposals. Hume's document, also known as **the Hume-Adams initiative**, proposed:
  - Self-determination for the Irish people as a whole. This meant that their decisions should be free from external influence.
  - That the British government reaffirm that Britain had no military, political or economic interest in Northern Ireland. This would go some way towards reducing tensions with republicans, who resented British involvement in Northern Ireland.
  - A joint agreement between nationalists and unionists on the creation of a government and the necessary institutions for running Northern Ireland.
  - The inclusion of an Irish dimension through an Irish Convention, which would work towards removing divisions between North and South.
  - The acceptance by the Irish government that the status of Northern Ireland was to be determined only with the consent of its citizens.

# A Strategy for Peace and Justice in Northern Ireland

- As a nationalist, Hume's goal was to pave the way for the eventual peaceful reunification of the island of Ireland that would win support from the IRA. However, he also hoped that his proposals were broad enough to include the wishes of all political groups, unionists included, while at the same time allaying their fears. Hume and Adams won support for the initiative from the Irish government when Finna Fáil's **Albert Reynolds** became Taoiseach in 1992. The British Prime Minister, John Major, believed that the proposals were unworkable, and that the unionists would completely reject the goal of Irish unification.
- In April 1993, the unionists learned of the secret talks that had been taking place between Hume, Adams and the Irish government. They believed that this was evidence of a nationalist conspiracy between the Irish government, the SDLP and IRA seeking Irish reunification. The Hume-Adams talks took place against a background of loyalist violence. The IRA also continued its campaign. Eighty-eight people died as a result of the Troubles in 1993, including two young boys who were killed when a bomb exploded in Warrington, England. Fifty-six others were injured in the same attack.



# The Hume-Adams Initiative Becomes Unworkable

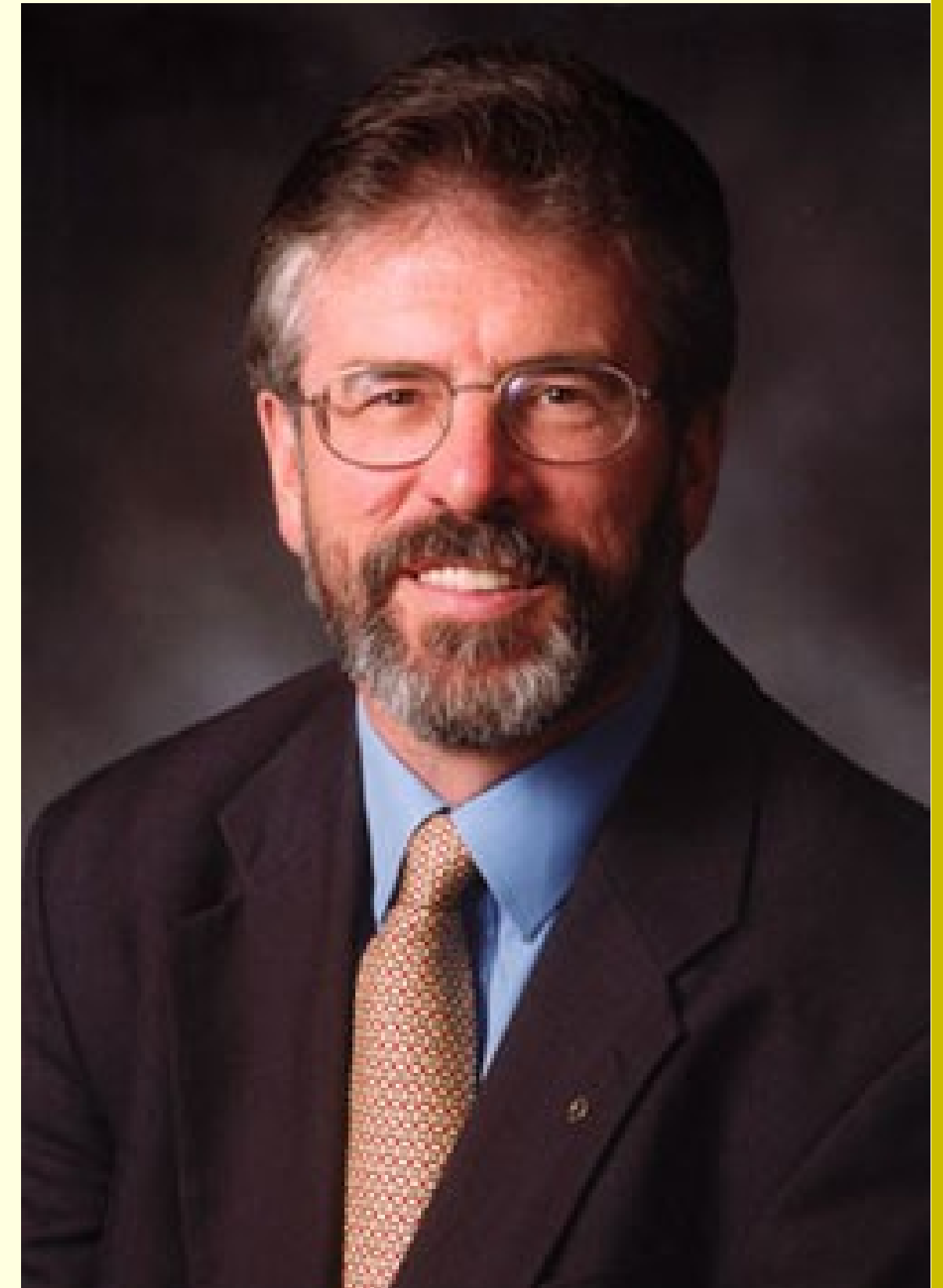
- Unionist reaction cast serious doubt over the Hume-Adams initiative, but it became completely unworkable after a series of IRA bombings in the autumn of 1993. In one attack, a Provisional IRA activist, **Thomas Begley**, was killed during an attempt to assassinate the UDA leadership. The bomb he was planting exploded early, killing nine other people in a shop on the Shankill Road. Gerry Adams acted as a pallbearer at Begley's funeral in order to maintain his support within the republican community.
- However, his actions caused fury among unionists. The UDA and UVF killed 14 Catholics in the weeks after the Shankill bomb. Politically, Adams's decision to take part in the republican funeral ceremony, and the violence that followed, convinced John Major that the Hume-Adams initiative was not credible. Another approach had to be found if peace talks were to continue.

# Key Personality: Gerry Adams (1948-)

- **Gerry Adams** was born in Belfast in 1948. His family was long involved in republicanism. After finishing school Adams worked as a barman, and in 1964 he joined Sinn Féin and Fianna Éireann, a nationalist youth organisation with links to the IRA. During the late 1960s he was active in the civil rights movement, but also became involved in the republican movement during the early years of the Troubles.

## Imprisonment

- Adams was imprisoned in 1972 in the belief that he was a commander of one of the IRA's Belfast units. He was released in order to take part in secret talks with the British government, which led to a short IRA ceasefire. Adams was interned subsequently. In prison, Adams wrote a number of articles for the republican newspaper An Phoblacht, criticising the Provisional IRA's killing of Official IRA members. He was released in 1977 and in 1978 was elected deputy leader of Sinn Féin. He was arrested again that year for alleged membership of the IRA, which he strongly denied, and was later released.



# Gaining Political Support

- Within Sinn Féin Adams called for a two-pronged approach to ending British rule and reunifying Ireland. This strategy required the Provisional IRA to maintain its terrorist campaign, while Sinn Féin worked to win political support from the nationalist community North and South. This was known as the 'Armalite and ballot box' strategy. The 1981 hunger strikes won greater support for Sinn Féin, and the party took five seats in the 1982 Northern Ireland assembly elections. Adams was elected President of Sinn Féin in 1983, and became MP for West Belfast the same year, though he abstained from taking his seat at Westminster. Over the following years Adams sought to grow Sinn Féin's support. This was helped by the party ending its abstentionist policy from the Dáil.



# Moving Away From Violence

- In 1992 Adams lost his seat in Westminster. This helped to convince the IRA that their use of violence could lose them nationalist support. A series of talks between Adams and SDLP leader John Hume led to the Hume-Adams initiative of 1993. The initiative proposed a framework for the gradual reunification of Ireland based on the consent of the majority of the North's population; it also contained proposals on power-sharing in the North. The British government rejected the proposals as one-sided, but they paved the way for further talks, and British acceptance that Sinn Féin should be involved - once the IRA called a ceasefire.

## Slow Progress

- Adams helped to secure an IRA ceasefire in August 1994. The talks that followed resulted in the Good Friday Agreement of 1998, which opened the way for a power-sharing executive in Northern Ireland. While Adams denies it, many historians and security services believe that he was a senior figure in the IRA well into the 1980s. He has also been accused of knowledge and involvement in a number of IRA actions during this period. Adams stepped down as President of Sinn Féin in 2017. He retired from politics in 2020.

## Exam Question

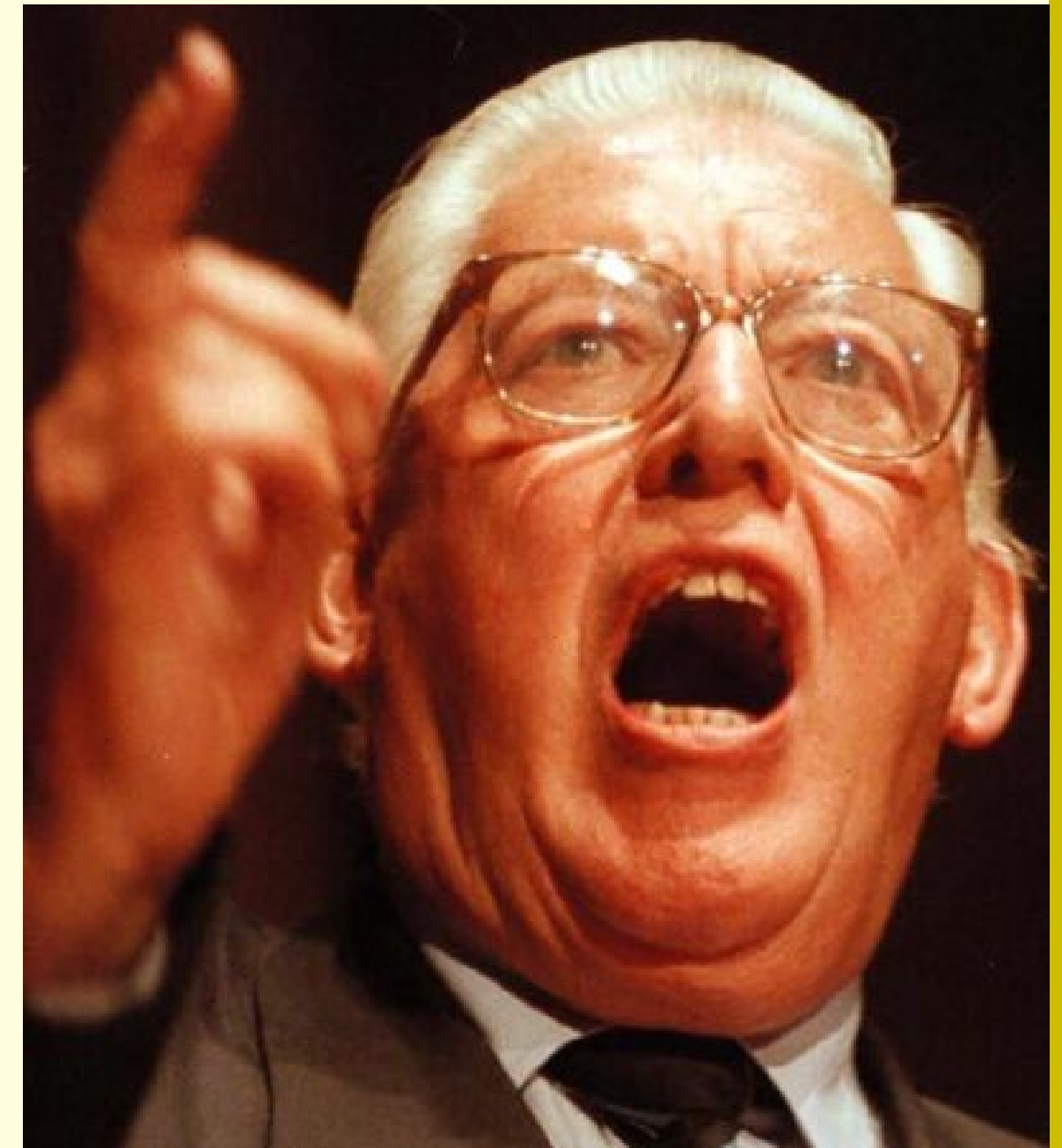
- What influence had Gerry Adams on the affairs of Northern Ireland? (2018 and 2019) OL

# Key Personality: Ian Paisley (1926-2014)

- **Ian Paisley** was born in Armagh in 1926 and raised in Ballymena, Co. Antrim. His father was an independent Baptist pastor, who had served in the Ulster Volunteer Force under the Unionist leader Edward Carson. Paisley became a Christian minister and was ordained by his father in 1946.

## Leader of his own church

- After a dispute with the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, he founded the separatist Free Presbyterian Church of Ulster in 1951. Paisley believed in the literal interpretation of the Bible and was strongly anti-Catholic. Paisley rose to prominence in the late 1950s due to his vocal opposition to ecumenism. He protested against the Anglican Church's attendance at the Second Vatican Council. In 1963 he staged a protest in Belfast against Terence O'Neill's decision to lower the flag to half-mast as a mark of respect on the death of Pope John XXIII.



# Opponent of Reconciliation

- Paisley opposed the Irish Republic having any involvement in Northern Ireland and denounced O'Neill as a traitor for meeting with Taoiseach Seán Lemass in 1965. He unsuccessfully stood against O'Neill in the 1969 election. In 1969 his supporters halted a People's Democracy march as it arrived at Burntollet Bridge on the outskirts of Derry city, which resulted in a riot. Paisley and his supporters staged similar counter-protests throughout the civil rights era, which often led to sectarian violence.

## Leader of his own party

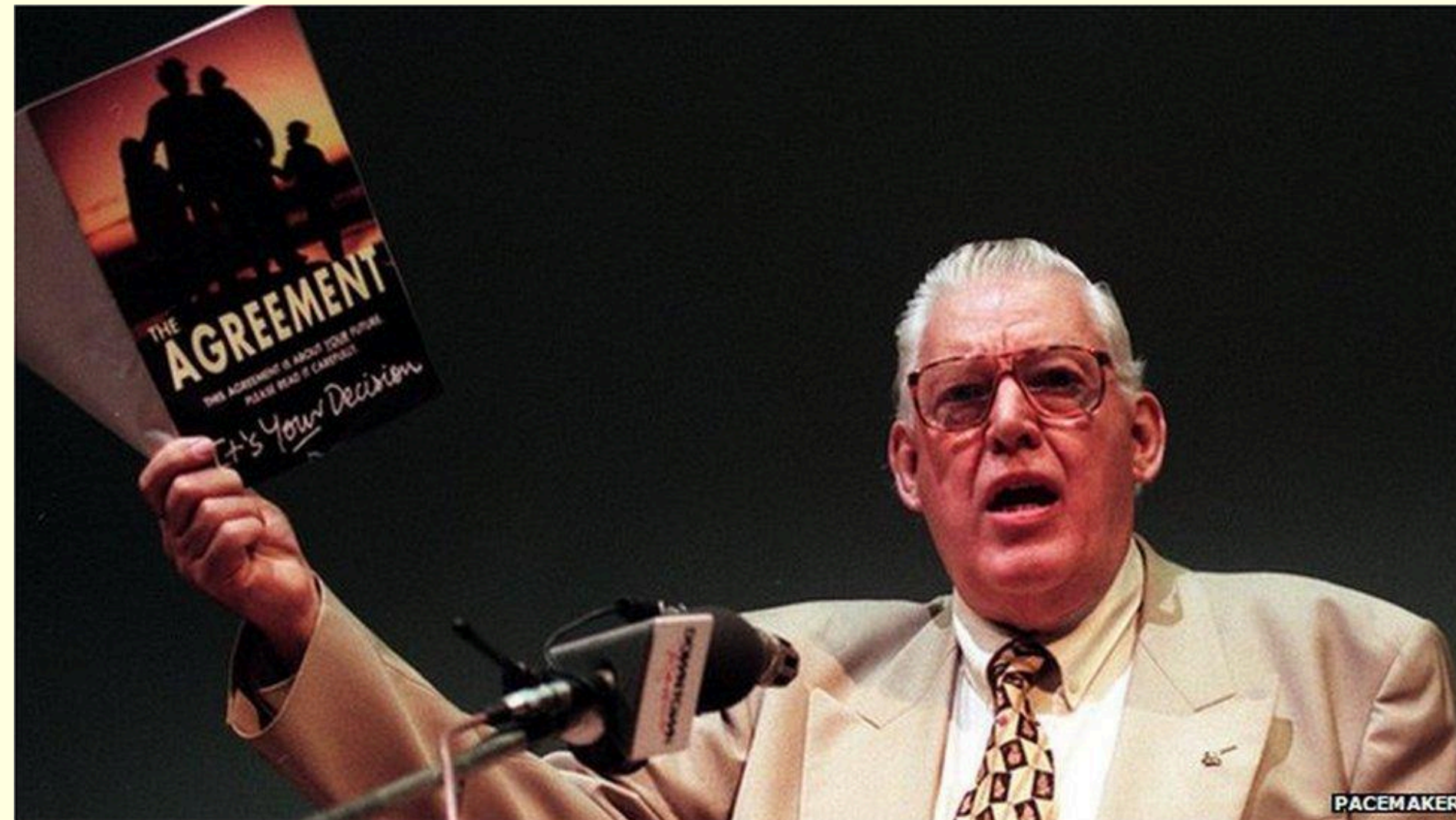
- An outspoken opponent of the Unionist government's political reforms, Paisley was elected as a Protestant Unionist MP to the Stormont parliament in April 1970. The following year he established the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP). When direct rule was introduced in 1972, Paisley and the DUP campaigned for the reopening of the Stormont parliament and protested against proposals for a power-sharing executive. Paisley played a large part in the collapse of the Sunningdale Agreement by supporting the UWC strike in 1974.

*Adapted from The Making of Ireland (Third Editions) by Paul Twomey, educate.ie*



# Unwilling to Compromise

- In 1977 Paisley planned another strike to demand the reintroduction of the Stormont parliament, but this was unsuccessful. Nevertheless, his uncompromising attitude won support from the unionist community and in 1979 he topped the poll in the European parliamentary elections. Paisley led the 'Ulster Says No' campaign against the Anglo-Irish Agreement of 1985. However, his association with loyalist extremists lost him support as many unionists began to move towards a more moderate political approach. Paisley remained a vocal opponent of the peace process and condemned the Good Friday Agreement of 1998.



# Power-sharing with Sinn Féin

- In the years following the Good Friday Agreement he became more open to the idea of power-sharing, and in 2007 became First Minister of the new Northern Ireland assembly. In 2008 he agreed to share power with Martin McGuinness and Sinn Féin. He stood down from the position in 2010 and retired as a practicing minister the following year. He died in Belfast in 2014.
- Despite the later changes in his political beliefs, Paisley was synonymous with intolerance and sectarianism during the Troubles and remained a divisive figure throughout his career.

## Exam Questions

- What was the contribution of Ian Paisley to the affairs of Northern Ireland? (2020) HL
- From your study of Northern Ireland, 1949-1993, what did you learn about Ian Paisley? (2019) HL (similar 2017 HL)
- How did Ian Paisley influence events in Northern Ireland? (2017 and 2019) OL





# The Downing Street Declaration, 15 December 1993

- When Albert Reynolds met John Major at a European Community summit in October 1993, he argued that they needed to take charge of the situation in Northern Ireland if progress was to be made. He convinced Major to join him in spearheading a **new initiative**.
- Reynolds and Major agreed that neither of their governments would hold any more secret talks with terrorist groups so as to prevent accusations of collusion or secret agreements. They also agreed that new decisions on the future of Northern Ireland would have to be agreed by both governments. The status of Northern Ireland would not be changed without the support of the majority of its citizens. The two leaders' primary goal was to secure an IRA ceasefire, as they believed that successful negotiations could not take place while the violence continued.
- Major and Reynolds issued a joint statement, the **Downing Street Declaration**, on 15 December 1993 from the steps of No. 10 Downing Street. The brief statement made clear to all sides in Northern Ireland the political position of the Irish and British governments:
- *The British Government agree that it is for the people of the island of Ireland alone, by agreement between the two parts respectively, to exercise their right of self-determination on the basis of consent, freely and concurrently given, North and South, to bring about a united Ireland, if that is their wish.*

# The Downing Street Declaration, 15 December 1993

- The British government had agreed to allow Northern Ireland to reunify with the South, if it was the will of the majority, but it also held that Northern Ireland would remain part of the United Kingdom as long as this, too, was the will of the majority. The Taoiseach, for his part, declared that *'it would be wrong to attempt to impose a united Ireland, in the absence of the freely given consent of the majority of the people of Northern Ireland'*. The future of Northern Ireland was to be decided by its citizens. The statement was broad enough to provide assurances to both nationalists and unionists. Later that afternoon Albert Reynolds called on the Provisional IRA to end its campaign so as to facilitate peace talks.
- *I appeal directly to the Provisional IRA to respond now to the wishes of the Irish nation clearly and emphatically expressed on repeated occasions to stop the killing. If the self-determination of the Irish people has any meaning or application, it surely applies above all else to the repeated rejection of support for violence at the polls by a large majority of both communities on this island. Once violence permanently ceases, the political leadership of Sinn Féin can join the rest of the democratic politicians on this island in working for a better and freer future for us all, for true peace and justice.* (Dáil Debates. Joint Declaration on Peace in Northern Ireland: Statements. Wednesday, 15 December 1993)

## Exam Question

- What was the importance of the Downing Street Declaration? (2019) HL
- Write a short paragraph on the Downing Street Declaration, 1993. (2017 and 2018) OL

# The IRA Ceasefire and Developments after 1993

- Republicans found themselves in a difficult position following the Downing Street Declaration. The IRA still sought British withdrawal and a united Ireland, as opposed to seeking the consent of both the Irish Republic and the people of Northern Ireland to reunification. However, if they rejected the declaration, this would cost them support. Adams and McGuinness believed that the declaration opened the way for Sinn Féin to take its place alongside the North's other political parties in discussions on the future of Northern Ireland, and were eager for the IRA to accept it.
- The **IRA's Army Council** initially rejected the Downing Street Declaration, but Adams sought clarification of some issues in hopes of persuading the IRA to accept its terms. Reynolds offered a concession to Adams, dropping the ban on republicans appearing on radio and television in the South, while US President **Bill Clinton**, who supported the peace efforts, granted Adams a visa to travel to the USA to take part in political discussions on Northern Ireland. These concessions gave Adams the time and means to convince the IRA to accept the declaration.
- On 31 August 1994 the IRA announced that it was calling a ceasefire and ending all military operations so as to allow talks on the political future of Northern Ireland to take place. This was a remarkable development in Northern Irish history. John Major said of the announcement that *'We are beyond the beginning but we are not yet in sight of the end.'*
- Satisfied that the IRA ceasefire was holding, leaders of the Protestant community, including Archbishop Eames, convinced loyalist paramilitaries to announce a ceasefire on 13 October. Even though the violence had largely ended, there were fears that the situation could erupt once more, and talks focused now on the permanent removal of weapons, with calls for both the IRA and loyalist paramilitaries to either decommission (destroy) or hand over their weapons.

# The Good Friday Agreement

- The IRA ceasefire ended in 1996 with the detonation of bombs in Canary Wharf, London, but a fresh ceasefire was called in 1997. During this period talks were ongoing and significant progress was made, resulting in the **Good Friday Agreement** on 10 April 1998. The agreement provided the basis for a new power-sharing executive. It also called on all terrorist groups to decommission their weapons under the supervision of an independent international commission.
- Taoiseach Bertie Ahern (left), US special envoy George Mitchell and British Prime Minister Tony Blair (right) brokered the Good Friday Agreement, April 1998. Some members of the IRA refused to support the peace process. A breakaway group known as the **Real IRA** attempted to cause the collapse of the Good Friday Agreement by detonating a car bomb on 15 August 1998 in the town of Omagh, killing 29 people and injuring 220. Despite the actions of the Real IRA, the Good Friday Agreement was maintained. David Trimble from the UUP and Seamus Mallon from the SDLP became the First Minister and Deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland in 1998.

## Exam Question

- How did the 'Troubles' erupt in 1969 and why did they last so long? (2018) HL

# The Peace Dividend

- Little progress was made during the 1980s in attracting foreign investment, despite the creation of a number of bodies such as the Industrial Development Board. Foreign investment only began to revive in the years following the signing of the Good Friday Agreement. In 1995 US President Bill Clinton appointed **Senator George Mitchell** as special envoy to Northern Ireland. The American government promised significant investment as part of the 'peace dividend'. The Northern Ireland economy outperformed the rest of the United Kingdom in the 1990s. This growth helped to redevelop many areas in Belfast and Derry, with the construction of offices, housing and other amenities. One of the most successful sectors was tourism, with particular growth in the US and European markets. Manufacturing also remained one of the North's main industries, with traditional companies such as Harland and Wolf diversifying into other forms of engineering and the fabrication of oil platforms.

# Recap

You should now be able to:

- Discuss a number of important political developments that occurred during the period 1985-1994 and led to a solution to the Troubles
- Recognise the impact that the involvement of US President Ronald Reagan had in convincing British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher that a political agreement needed to be found
- Analyse the Anglo-Irish Agreement and explain why it was an important step Appreciate that in the years that followed the agreement, unionist opposition eased, leading to more inclusive talks by the late 1980s and early 1990s
- Recognise the significance of the Hume-Adams initiative
- Understand that following the Downing Street Declaration in 1993, the IRA announced a ceasefire in 1994 but that violence broke out again in 1996
- Evaluate the Good Friday Agreement of 1998 and explain how it finally secured the decommissioning of weapons

# Questions: Revision

1. What role did the Friends of Ireland play in developing Anglo-Irish relations?
2. What were the main terms of the Anglo-Irish Agreement?
3. How did unionists react to the Anglo-Irish Agreement and why?
4. What was the 'Ulster Says No' campaign?
5. What proposals did the UDA put forward after the Anglo-Irish Agreement was signed?
6. How did the IRA increase its terrorist campaign in the late 1980s?
7. What steps did Gerry Adams and John Hume take that made for further progress in the peace process?
8. Why did the Hume-Adams initiative become unworkable?
9. What contribution did Albert Reynolds and John Major make to the peace process?
10. What was the significance of the Downing Street Declaration, 1993?
11. How did the IRA and loyalist paramilitaries respond to the Downing Street Declaration?
12. What was the Good Friday Agreement and what consequences did it have?
13. What factors contributed to Northern Ireland's economic stagnation during the 1980s?
14. How did the peace process help to develop Northern Ireland's economy?

# Higher Level Questions

1. What was the importance of one or more of the following: the Sunningdale Agreement, 1973; the Anglo-Irish Agreement, 1985; the Downing Street Declaration, 1993?
2. What moves were made towards finding a peaceful resolution to the 'Troubles'?
3. What was the impact of republican and loyalist terrorism in Northern Ireland?
4. Assess the roles played by the British and Irish governments in the peace process.



# Ordinary Level Questions

1. Write a short paragraph on one of the following:
  - a. James Molyneaux
  - b. A Strategy for Peace and Justice in Northern Ireland
  - c. Unionist opposition to the peace process
  - d. Northern Ireland's economy in the 1980s.
2. What political attempts were made to resolve the Troubles, 1969-1993?
3. What role did one or more of the following play in the peace process: John Hume, Gerry Adams, Ian Paisley?